

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 369 877

UD 029 882

AUTHOR Newkumet, Mary Beth; Casserly, Michael
TITLE Urban School Safety: Strategies of the Great City Schools.
INSTITUTION Council of the Great City Schools, Washington, D.C.e
PUB DATE Mar 94
NOTE 52p.
AVAILABLE FROM Council of the Great City Schools, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 702, Washington, DC 20004.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Change Strategies; *Community Involvement; Educational Objectives; *Educational Strategies; Elementary Secondary Education; *Prevention; *Program Descriptions; Program Development; Resource Materials; School Districts; *School Safety; Strategic Planning; *Urban Schools

ABSTRACT

This booklet contains descriptions of what America's schools are doing on their own and in collaboration with their communities to make things better and safer for urban communities. It does not contain statistics on the extent of urban problems; it simply focuses on what urban adults are trying to do for urban children. Program descriptions are given for 36 urban school districts. Each description includes: (1) background and description of the school district, (2) descriptions of preventive programs, and (3) descriptions of intervention programs. A contact number for more information is given for each district. (SLD)

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Urban School Safety: Strategies of the Great City Schools

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March, 1994

UD029882

URBAN SCHOOL SAFETY: STRATEGIES OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

March, 1994

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INTRODUCTION

The American public has not been so concerned with issues of violence and crime, particularly amongst its young, in many years. It now ranks as the nation's number one concern on many country-wide polls, and in a recent poll of the nation's urban school leaders it was listed as their highest current concern.

The violence of America's culture and history made it almost inevitable that schools would eventually find their share of the problem. Schools are not immune from the culture but instead both reflect and shape our national text. And the concern about violence in urban schools is not now—and probably never should have been—a strictly inner city phenomenon. If there was a strategy to contain it there, it has clearly failed. The violence appears everywhere, although the headlines are still made in the cities and their schools.

Still, schools remain one of the safest places a child can be. More children are clearly hurt or killed on the streets and even at home than in the classrooms and school-yards of our cities. City schools remain a safe-haven for our children despite the concerns.

But as generally safe as urban children are in school, urban school leaders are not generally satisfied with the level of safety in their schools. They are putting out enormous effort and creativity to address what is there and to ensure the public that their children are generally safe.

This booklet is about those efforts. It does not contain statistics on the extent of the problem, for there is plenty of data around—some good, some phoney—on the extent of the problem. This booklet is a simple description of what America's urban schools are doing on their own and in collaboration with their communities to make things better and safer for urban school children.

I think the readers of this will be surprised at the range, scope and creativity of much that is going on, although most urban school leaders admit that there is not one model program and no magic solution. We are also not sure of the extent to which these programs separately or in combination work. We are convinced—and those who are working hard every day in our inner city schools are convinced—that these programs help, and that they help in ways that quite sensitive to the development needs of our children.

We should be quick to keep in mind that the problem is not a problem with the kids; it is more of a problem with adults because the kids learned the violence from watching grown-ups. This report is about what urban grown-ups are trying to do to solve the problem.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

Baltimore City Public Schools

Background: Children learn best when they are in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. Over the past two years, the Baltimore City's Department of Education has developed a safe schools campaign aimed specifically at reducing and eliminating disruptions and school violence and making schools and the surrounding communities safer. Like all citizens, Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke is deeply concerned about the ongoing violence in Baltimore City streets and schools. The city has made progress, however, by meeting the problems head on, and by involving students and community leaders in finding new ways to ensure safer schools in Baltimore.

Preventive Programs: Baltimore City Public Schools have maintained a safe secure environment for students and staff during the past two years by implementing a "Safe Schools: Successful Students Initiative" which connects the issue of violence and safety to the total community.

Understanding that violence and the presence of guns and other weapons are problems in which the entire community needs to be involved, Superintendent Dr. Walter Amprey created a "Superintendent's Safe School Committee" to explore creative solutions to assuring the safety of both students and staff in schools. That working group includes community leaders, city agency representatives, students, teachers, parents, principals, and central office staff under the leadership of Reverend Emmett Burns. The Committee organized a symposium on juvenile violence in December, supported the "Turn in the Guns Day" in Baltimore on January 15th, and is working with "Marylanders Against Hand Gun Abuse."

The "Safe Schools Initiative" began in August 1991, when the Superintendent held a summit that brought students together from 18 elementary, middle and high schools. Mayor Schmoke joined the Superintendent and others in asking students what they felt needed to be done to ensure that Baltimore City Schools were safe and secure. The students came up with a number of suggestions including more school police officers, a safe schools hot-line, neighborhood "safe houses", and conflict resolution and mediation seminars.

It was clear from this meeting that getting students involved in solving the problems of violence in schools was a positive step forward. In October, 1993, a city-wide "Safe School Summit Day" was organized to involve students, parents and teachers at every school in the city in developing plans to enhance safety and learning. Many of these programs are now in operation including those described below.

Interventive Programs: Baltimore City now has a "Safe School Hotline (410)396-8591 which students use to report the presence of weapons or drugs in their schools.

"I personally got into a lot of fights last year...and peer mediation helped me understand a lot of things,"
—student from Robert Poole Middle School in Baltimore City.

Teaching young people the skills to find peaceful resolution to problems is another key in the "Safe Schools Initiative". Conflict mediation programs have already been initiated in a number of neighborhood schools, and plans are underway to expand them city-wide.

City Schools have also added more school police in some instances and are encouraging parents to be more a more visible presence in the hallways and cafeterias. In addition, a pilot program in east Baltimore to create "safe havens" has been initiated in the neighborhoods so that students are not afraid of walking to or from schools. And the city is also working with churches, libraries and other community institutions to open their doors to children if they need to make a phone call or feel endangered on the streets.

In February, 1994, all city schools were involved in a "Safe Schools Weeks" to highlight the urgency of constant vigilance and personal commitment to the effort. Local political leaders and actor Charles "Roc" Dutton" helped kick off the activities. Later in the week, more than 2000 students attended a stimulating show on nonviolence and respect for each other, hosted by Baltimore native Montel Williams.

School superintendent Walter Amprey maintains that the overall approach to controlling violence in schools lies in changing the climate and culture of schools so that they are appreciated for their ideas and involvement. To that end, the Superintendent created several "Breakthrough Teams" for senior high schools. The "breakthrough teams (comprised of young, energetic student facilitators) go into high schools to work directly with troubled or problem students and to assist teachers and principals in maintaining a tranquil environment. The "breakthrough teams" use creative solutions to problems of discipline and poor attendance. They extend themselves beyond normal boundaries by going into homes and into the community as they seek to "save the students" in city high schools. A key strategy used by the "breakthrough teams" is "giving students a voice" in the solution of their own problems.

All of these initiatives are contributing to a more optimistic atmosphere for Baltimore City students.

Boston Public Schools

Background: In March 1992, the Boston Public Schools convened a Citywide Youth Safety Committee to develop strategies that would guarantee for all students a safe and secure learning environment. While the city already had a number of programs in place — including a nationally recognized Violence Prevention Program for its middle and high schools students — school leaders realized that the escalation of violence nationwide warranted additional strategies. However, the committee also recognized that funding new programs is difficult and must remain a priority to ensure that schools have the flexibility to fulfill their program needs from year to year.

Preventive Programs: Recognizing that much violent behavior results from student needs that have little or nothing to do with school, the committee recommended the establishment of Student Support Teams (SST) to help all students at risk — both academically and non-academically. The teams draw on the expertise and experience of all staff and outside professionals using a holistic approach. Tailoring assistance to the individual student, the team considers and recommends, case by case, solutions that involve the school, the student, the parents and outside agencies. Early intervention for social services can prevent more serious (and much more costly) intervention later.

Some innovations have occurred at school sites. Among the most promising programs teaching students alternatives to violence are the conflict resolution/mediation program and the peer leadership program. In the former, students and teachers are trained as mediators to help others — student and student, student and teacher, even teacher and teacher — reach agreements in a dispute. The result for many schools has been an improved school climate and a reduction in the number of fights, suspensions and expulsions. The peer leadership program helps students learn to work with their peers on social issues affecting all of them.

Other preventive programs currently working in the Boston Public Schools are a 3rd to 5th grade student adviser program that relies on each adult employee to act as a liaison to the family, parent orientations, workshops on how parents can help their children, and crisis intervention specialists on school sites. A program with the Boston Community Centers ensures student support after school hours. The Winner's Circle is a program that identifies at-risk students and provides academic and social support.

The committee also recommended the use of violence prevention curriculum in the schools — similar to the HIV/AIDS education curriculum now in use — and the establishment of school-based health centers in all high schools. Parent outreach and staff development are also being expanded.

“If we ask our schools to provide these critically needed services, we must be able to ensure them that the programs they have developed and the support they have come to rely on will be in place year after year.”
—from report of the Citywide Youth Safety Committee

Interventive Programs. The committee recommended the need for a Crisis Response Team in each school similar to the team already in place in the central Boston Public Schools Office. This team comprises professionals from psychological services, guidance, student support services, interim services, medical services, and school police who are deployed to assist school staff in an emergency and who provide training to school-based teams.

Similarly, the Behavior Management Team, comprised of school psychologists and pupil adjustment counselors is designed to assist schools in "proactive behavior management." The program features a series of workshops on whole school and classroom behavior management, follow-up consultation with individual teachers, and parent workshops.

The Boston Schools also seek to improve communication between the schools, the Department of Safety Services and the Boston Police Department. The Citywide Youth Committee recommended sharing information (within legal constraints) and developing ways such as a computerized database to communicate such information in a timely and secure manner. The School Department and the Police Department have established a monthly schedule of meetings, with more frequent communication as needed.

The Mayor of the City of Boston, in consultation with the school superintendent, has declared 1994 as "The Year of Youth Safety". This proclamation was marked by 17 town meetings held in each of the city's neighborhoods. The initial town meeting was jointly chaired by the Mayor and the Superintendent with a panel which included representatives of parents, students, and community organizations. The purpose of the town meetings was to initiate discussion among and between all city departments, community agencies, neighborhood associations and individual citizens, and to promote city-wide and neighborhood planning and sharing of resources and programs designed to establish youth safety. The effort is based on the belief that only with cooperation, support and involvement of the entire community can youth safety be addressed.

For more information
contact the Boston Public
Schools (617) 635-9050

Buffalo Public Schools

Background: Buffalo Public Schools have maintained safe and secure schools by implementing a number of security procedures and violence prevention programs. Buffalo public school students are dependent on public transportation to bring them to and from school — a fact that poses unique challenges to student safety. Students use subways and metro buses and opportunities for violence can happen in these unsupervised places. Recent improvements in the schools' security are helping to curtail the violence.

Preventive Programs: In 1993, all 68 Buffalo Public Schools were established — with signs posted — as gun-free and drug-free zones as mandated under federal law. A new 126-hour training program for all school security personnel is being conducted by the Buffalo Police Department.

Interventive Programs: Combined after-school patrols of Buffalo police and school security officers were put in place in 1993. For four hour shifts, regular city police cars are manned by one police officer and one school guard familiar with the students. This partnership ensures that enforcement is highly effective.

Buffalo Public Schools have an AIM (Attendance Is Mandatory) Team that patrols the streets, malls, and other public areas of the city locating students who are truant. The team is comprised of two Buffalo Police Officers and two Buffalo attendance teachers. Truants are taken to a center and parents are notified. At 1:30 pm each day, the AIM Team reverts to Security Services as Buffalo Police Officers assist school security officers in patrolling potential trouble spots. In addition, the Metro police who monitor trouble on buses and subways as 12,000 public school students travel each day assist the AIM Team and the Security Service patrols when called upon. A District-wide radio system ensures that all security officers, Buffalo and Metro police and school mobile units are in contact with each other at all times and that schools have radio contact with all of them through the Central District Dispatch. Any school can request and count on immediate assistance at any time.

The widely publicized Weapons and Drug Tip Line enables students and other citizens to call in information about illegal activity 24 hours a day. The tip line accepts and investigates all complaints. Tips that relate to the community are referred to the Buffalo Police Department.

Buffalo Public Schools enforce random locker searches for high school students and have a universal ban on packs and bags for all students, both elementary and secondary.

"The kids are afraid, so they carry weapons."

—William Jackson,
Director of Security for the Buffalo Public Schools

For more information
contact the Buffalo Public
Schools (716) 851-3575

Cleveland Public Schools

"Drug Free
Schools
programming all
speak to the
issue of violence
prevention."
—from
"Cleveland
Public Schools
Initiatives in
Violence
Prevention"

Background: Mirroring national trends, the Cleveland City School District has added violence to its list of health priorities. The Health Education Office has expanded its training of teachers, students and parents to respond to this new focus. Current training aims to increase participants' knowledge about the effects and expressions of violence. The programs also try to change attitudes towards violence and to eliminate violent behavior.

Preventive Programs: The Cleveland schools have developed youth mediation and peer counseling programs that provide training to teams of students in mediation and conflict management. The programs also provide to classroom teachers skill development training on alternative dispute resolution methods.

In Cleveland's 86 elementary schools, the Watch Your Hands curriculum provides instruction in the proper use of hands. This curriculum incorporates discipline assemblies, classroom discussions and activities that are reinforced by posters in classrooms.

In addition, the Cleveland schools have a number of drug prevention programs for all grade levels that incorporate the issue of violence. The schools' Comprehensive Health Education Program also discusses violence prevention in its curriculum. The Assisting Students and Parents Collaborative Project (ASAP) is a program designed to have a significant impact on the attitude and behavior of the students toward Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs.

Working with the Greater Cleveland Roundtable, the Cleveland public schools are implementing the Children and Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, a program that involves 200 high school and middle school students in the development and implementation of strategies to improve school climate and help ensure secure and friendly learning environments.

In January 1994, 20 Cleveland public schools will begin implementing the STAR (Straight Talk About Risks) curriculum. This program for grades K-12 addresses all forms of violence.

Interventive Programs: The Youth Gang unit established in 1990 is a specialized program that intervenes and prevents the growing gang and drug-related violence in the school district. Workshops are held for parents, school staff and the community.

For more information
contact the Cleveland
Public Schools (216) 574-
8500

Columbus Public Schools

Background: Columbus Public Schools have implemented a K-12 Comprehensive Safe Schools Program Framework which addresses broadly the two major areas of prevention and intervention. Our goal is to provide a safe, secure and healthy educational environment for all students and staff. We believe that violence includes any threat or use of force that injures or intimidates a person, makes them feel afraid or damages property. The Columbus Public Schools are an active participant in a county-wide educational violence prevention and intervention initiative, with each district providing expertise and resources. Current inservice training includes a menu of developmentally appropriate education/prevention programs and intervention strategies/techniques designed to help students, staff and parents feel safe about schools.

Preventive Programs: Education/prevention programs and activities implemented within the schools are designed to create a positive school climate. Because we know that knowledge alone does not change behaviors, our programs/activities also include opportunities to explore personal attitudes and the development of skills. Specific programs include:

TRIBES, a process for social development and cooperative learning, is being implemented in grades K-12 including key elements of acceptance of self and others, a sense of belonging, interpersonal communication, problem solving and decision-making, and the acceptance of diversity. Peer mediation training is also being expanded to help students resolve conflict. Through Ohio State University, a 30 hour course called "Alternatives to Violence" is being offered to school staff.

Columbus Police Officers are also actively involved in our education/prevention program. DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) is provided to all students in grades K-5. And through a program called Safety City, produced by the American Red Cross and the Columbus Police, the children learn how to dial 911, and get tips on the dangers of strangers, poisonous substances and traffic safety.

Violence prevention curricula materials have been reviewed and integrated within the normal course of study. And "Second Step", from the Committee for Children in Seattle will be piloted at the elementary and middle school levels this year. The program teaches skills in empathy, impulse control, problem solving, appropriate social behavior and anger management. "Violence Prevention for Adolescents", a curriculum by Deborah Prothrow Stith, will be piloted with our high school students this year. Violence prevention activities have been integrated into many of our existing peer leadership programs developed through drug-free initiatives.

"We realize that violence is a complex problem that did not develop overnight and will not be stopped overnight."

—Moses Hubert,
Director of Safety and Security Services,
Columbus Public Schools

Finally, a "Safe Schools Newsletter" is sent home to parents on a regular basis to share information and tips to keep children safe and to incorporate parental involvement.

Interventive Programs: The Columbus Public Schools have a number of intervention efforts including: "Intervention Assistance Teams (IAT) which are used in schools for problem solving. Staff, students and parents may refer a student to IAT when there is a concern about a student's academic, behavioral or social performance. The goal is to provide strategies, techniques, and if necessary, referral to a program or service to assist the student outside of school. Early identification is a key focus of the IAT rather than waiting for the issue to reach a disciplinary stage.

For students involved with a disciplinary incident, the schools have several programs which serve as alternatives to traditional discipline actions. "Saturday Family Workshops for Alcohol and Other Drug Awareness" is a free, educational and family focused program available to high school students and their parents. The Saturday series is sequential and builds from one session to another. Families are empowered as parents gain support from other parents and increase their skills and awareness of how to handle problems.

"PEAK (Positive Efforts in Adjustment and Knowledge)" is an in-school suspension program which keeps students in an educational atmosphere and works at teaching techniques for managing inappropriate behavior. "I-PASS (Individual Plan for Attainment of Success in School)" is an alternative school program for students in grades 6-12 who have been recommended for expulsion.

Columbus Public Schools' "Safety and Security Force" (28 full-time staff) assist staff with unruly students, transport students home when necessary to provide support for high risk students to help them focus on making better choices. In addition, all schools have been equipped with two-way radios to increase communication within the buildings and with Safety and Security.

With assistance from our juvenile courts, probation officers have been assigned to six high schools, and juvenile officers have been assigned to clusters of schools. This initiative has increased communication among the schools, the police department, community agencies and the juvenile courts. "Drug-Free/Weapon Free Zone" signs have been posted on all school sites.

In addition, a collaborative project with the Franklin County Juvenile Courts, Franklin County Children Services, the ADAMH board and the Columbus Schools is being pilot tested in four elementary schools. The FCCS case worker and an ADAMH agency worker have been placed in each of the schools. The agencies work with students who are experiencing serious difficulty in school, and with the families to design a "wrap around" service plan".

Finally, Columbus is piloting the "Cities in Schools" project in nine of its schools. CIS is a process which attempts to connect society with high risk students through social service intervention at each stage in a student's development. The process calls for the repositioning of service providers and volunteers alongside teachers who create a team approach to meet the needs of Columbus students.

For more information
contact the Columbus
Public Schools (614) 365-
5663

Dade County Public Schools

"When students or adults feel that they are physically at risk, little teaching or learning transpires."

—James Comer, from Dade County's "Safe Orderly Schools"

Background: In 1993, the Dade County Public Schools developed a comprehensive violence prevention report called S.O.S. (Safe Orderly Schools). The report and its recommendations are the result of a strong working group of community leaders, school personnel, parents, students and school board officials. In the Fall of 1993, a communications plan was implemented to educate the public about the S.O.S. initiatives, notably more stringent policies for possession of weapons. Radio and print materials were produced for the English-speaking, Latin and Haitian communities.

Preventive Programs: Like some other big city school districts, the Dade County Schools have embraced the S.T.A.R. (Straight Talk About Risk) curriculum developed with the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence in Washington, D.C. The S.T.A.R. program was adopted by Dade County in 1992 and is taught to grades K-12. The schools also incorporate Project PROUD (Peacefully Resolving Our Unsettled Differences), conflict management and resolution strategies into existing curriculum and programs.

At the suggestion of the S.O.S. report, 47 new school resource officers were hired so every secondary school would have a police officer on campus. In addition, school security monitors are receiving more training and will be issued uniforms.

Interventive Programs: The most significant change in policy, thanks to the S.O.S. report, is the expulsion policy for possession of firearms and use of weapons for assault purposes. Now students with firearms on campus will automatically be subject to felony arrest and be recommended for immediate expulsion.

The new S.A.V.E. (Students Against Violence in Education) hotline, a digital voice messaging phone that allows anyone to report a crime, enables students to intervene confidentially if they know of weapons, drugs or other illegal substances or activities in their schools.

The district conducts random hand-held metal detector searches for weapons on secondary school campuses.

For more information
contact the Dade County
Public Schools (305) 995-
1430

Dallas Public Schools

Background: In 1992 the Dallas Public Schools convened a city-wide Safety and Security Summit of approximately 1,200 participants involving students, parents, teachers, youth organizations, community services, religious communities, law enforcement, and city/county/state officials to identify safety and security issues facing our schools and communities. The resulting unified focus and collaborative support have strengthened the existing Safety and Security Division to incorporate innovative initiatives and proactive approaches to juvenile violence abatement. The existing Safety and Security Department was recently realigned into three components for more effective delivery of services: Campus Services, District-Wide Services and Communications.

Preventive Programs: All high schools maintain Youth Action Centers, which are staffed with specialists in instruction, counseling and security efforts, in addition to a uniformed officer of the Dallas Police Department. The consistent reinforcement from the schools, parents, community and law enforcement provide an accountability loop for providing a safe school setting for students and staff. Proactive, preventive measures addressing causes rather than symptoms have highest priority.

A new youth development initiative features expanded training in character education, enhanced behavior expectations and socialization skills. The program will also expand extracurricular opportunities, introduce new leadership training and provide community service experiences for young people. An anti-violence curriculum has been adopted through the Health Education component. Conflict resolution training will be completed by all schools in 1994-95.

Alternative education centers have been established to provide the continuation of the educational process for students experiencing difficulty in the traditional classrooms. A Learning Alternative Center for Expelled Youth (LACEY) provides collaborative services for expelled youth, including academic, counseling, mental and social services from the school, county, city and state.

Security services and equipment have been upgraded to include additional metal detectors, both hand-held and walk-through, surveillance cameras, random weapons screening, deputization of the Security Department, a part-time task force, 24-hour security hotline, Drug-Free/Gun-Free Zones, and computerized security records and data sharing.

Interventive Programs: District-wide crisis teams and local campus planning teams have been formed to deal with multiple crisis situations involving community

and state agencies. Cooperative planning with the Chief of Police and city leadership have resulted in various legislative initiatives and grants focused on safe schools for Dallas students. Student involvement in the Youth Crime Commission has influenced state participation in the development of specific safety programs.

Youth and Family Centers, a concept of multi-agency social service centers to serve students and their families, will be implemented in three sites during the Spring, 1994. The district plans to use a specific design in planned new school facilities that will allocate space for community use, including seven more proposed centers during the next several years.

For more information call
the Dallas Public Schools
(214) 824-1629

Dayton Public Schools

Background: The Dayton Public Schools have recently instituted a tough new policy regarding violent behavior in schools.

Preventive Programs: The Dayton Public Schools are instituting new curricula in the areas of conflict resolution and peer mediation.

Interventive Programs: The Dayton Board of Education adopted a policy in November 1993 that will enable the district to permanently exclude from school a student who is convicted of weapons-related crimes on school grounds or at school functions. Specifically, any student 16 years of age or older who has been convicted in criminal court or found delinquent in juvenile court of one or more specific offenses may be forbidden to attend any public school in the state of Ohio. Prior to the new policy, a student who committed a serious offense could be expelled for up to 160 days. The superintendent also is meeting with community leaders to examine the issue of violence in our society and the needs of students who exhibit violent behavior.

"This policy allows us to take a tougher no-nonsense approach in dealing with students whose presence in school may pose a threat to the safety of others."

—Dayton
School
Superintendent
James A.
Williams

For more information
contact the Dayton Public
Schools (513) 461-3164

Denver Public Schools

"Although it is clear that the increase in violence is a societal issue, our schools mirror that society. What affects this community will affect our schools."

—Denver School Superintendent Evie Dennis

Background: Denver Public Schools are working with school staff, the local police, the District Attorney, the Mayor, business officials and community members to prevent violence in its schools.

Preventive Programs: The Denver Public Schools have studied successful programs in other cities and have already incorporated the best strategies for dealing with violent behavior. Students receive training in conflict resolution and mediation; mentoring is fostered and staff development is encouraged. In addition, security has been increased at all schools.

Programs linked to the community such as "Lunch with the Denver Police Officer," provide students with an opportunity to meet police officers as individuals who care about their safety. Students are also urged to participate in the Denver "Crime Stoppers" program, which allows for anonymous tips about illegal activity.

School officials also worked with KCNC-TV 4 in Denver in producing, "A Family Guide to Preventing Violence." Underwritten by United Airlines and promoted on Channel 4, this publication provides important prevention information to the whole community. Denver citizens just call the station for a free copy.

Interventive Programs: Denver has a strict policy that forbids guns in schools. This policy suspends students caught with weapons, including "look-alikes," and recommends expulsion if verified. In early 1993, all Denver school parents received a letter outlining the new tough policy.

For more information
contact the Denver Public
Schools (303) 764-3301

Detroit Public Schools

Background: The Detroit Public Schools system has recently established the Clean and Safe Schools Task Force to aggressively assist the Detroit Board of Education and its General Superintendent in creating a positive learning environment for its 175,000 students. The purpose of the task force is implementation of high standards for school maintenance and upkeep and violence prevention and safety. Ninety school and community leaders provide their expertise to ensure success of the program.

Preventive Programs: Some of the task force's initiatives involve improving the cleanliness and maintenance of school grounds, acknowledging that school pride increases with an improved campus setting. Thirty-three schools with the most severe cleanliness problems were targeted for immediate action by the task force. The program puts additional emphasis on assessment of maintenance needs and swiftly correcting them. Long-term maintenance problems requiring major expenditures or personnel will be prioritized.

Interventive Programs: The school system has implemented a timetable for installation of metal detectors in every high school and middle school in the Detroit schools. Hand held detectors will be furnished to schools on an as-needed basis. In addition to detectors, the Detroit Police Department will conduct random school "weapons sweeps."

The Detroit Public Schools Security Officers have a special response team in place to provide immediate help in school emergencies anywhere in the school district.

New patrols of the exteriors of schools before and after school will be conducted by administrators, and staff with help from community volunteers.

For more information
contact the Detroit Public
Schools (313) 494-1075

El Paso Public Schools

Background: The El Paso Independent School District has a variety of programs aimed at school safety and violence prevention.

Preventive Programs: The El Paso public schools continue to work closely with the city's Stop the Violence Coalition, which consists of all law enforcement agencies in town. The schools work with the coalition by featuring contests and special programs for students. Like other districts, all El Paso schools have drug-free and gun-free signage that defines zones where crimes receive tougher sentences.

In addition, El Paso public schools have parent volunteers at many middle and high school campuses. These parents patrol the campus in the morning, at lunchtime and in the afternoon, supplementing the eyes and ears of school staff. While counselors have always been on these campuses, all El Paso elementary schools now have counselors or at-risk coordinators as well.

Interventive Programs: A "Crime Stoppers" call-in program for anonymous tips on campus or community crimes is in place in all El Paso high schools. Beginning in January 1994, alternative schools have been expanded for students in grades 6-12 who have problems at their home campuses.

The El Paso schools have also adopted stricter more aggressive policies on expelling students caught with weapons and involved in serious assaults. An additional policy was recently adopted allowing principals to approve all student transfers to their schools.

For more information
contact the El Paso Public
Schools (915) 779-4010

Fresno Public Schools

Background: Fresno Unified School District is actively involved in addressing immediate campus safety issues as well as providing programs that will teach values, change attitudes and help both parent and children understand conflict resolution.

Preventive Programs: In September 1993, the Fresno Unified School District Board approved the instruction of interpersonal problem-solving curricula in 18 schools for the 1993-94 school year, with plans for district-wide implementation to be in place by the end of the school year. The curriculum promotes decision-making and communication skills, and a tolerance for diversity. Many of the materials address the reduction of impulsive and aggressive behavior, awareness of prejudice and reduction of community friction among ethnic or religious groups.

Interventive Programs: The new Fresno Family Counseling Center, a partnership between the Fresno Public Schools and the Fresno State University, enables master's degree candidates to help at-risk students and their parents. The students — some facing expulsion — are referred by their schools, and come to the center with their families as required. The Fresno schools also have an interventive program that provides an alternate education for at-risk elementary school students. These programs help students stay in school while receiving essential assistance.

Campus Police/Probation Teams have been developed to provide prevention and early intervention services at Fresno high schools. Police officers already assigned to a campus will be joined by a probation officer with an office located on campus, providing on-site help to minors already on probation and still in school. School and law enforcement officials believe the new project will allow for more accountability of student behavior.

Another joint effort of the Fresno schools and the Fresno Police Department began in January 1994. In Operation Stay in School (O.S.I.S.), police officers pick up minors or school age children who are not in school during school hours and bring them to an

O.S.I.S. Center where their parents are notified and the students returned to school.

The Fresno schools also have expanded sworn officer visibility, and have frequent patrols in school areas. Campus assistants with clearly marked vests who are assigned to secondary schools receive training in cooperation with law enforcement agencies.

For more information
contact the Fresno Public
Schools (209) 441-3515

Houston Public Schools

"Students, teachers, parents and the community expect schools to be free of disruption and danger so that academic achievement and positive social development can take place."
—Rod Paige,
Houston
Superintendent
of Schools.

Background: After a 1992-93 survey indicated that the majority of Houston public school students did not feel that their school environment was safe and secure, the Houston Independent School District enacted new initiatives to create safe instructional environments in each of its 244 schools. The district has welcomed parental and community involvement in developing school-based programs, as well as in district-wide safety policies.

Preventive Programs: The Houston school district has a number of programs as part of the curriculum for students in grades K-12 that focus on non-violent problem resolution and mediation. Character education curriculum focuses on the development of responsible citizenship for all grade levels. In Project DARE, Houston Police Officers come into the classroom to talk to elementary and middle school students about protecting themselves from violence and drug abuse — and how to resist peer pressure.

Dads in Action is made up of students' fathers who volunteer their time to patrol hallways and other open areas in the schools, as well as serve as role models and mentors for young students.

Coalition of Ministers Against Crime formed a partnership in 1991 with the Houston school district to provide assistance in parent or student counseling and to guide students in drug and violence prevention including on-site volunteer support. In some school communities, the coalition provides after-school supervision as well as parent counseling at local churches.

Recognizing the need for some additional expertise, the Houston school district has also appointed a police chief with an urban law enforcement background that includes successful implementation of drug and gang-prevention strategies. The district has expanded jurisdiction of school district police officers to include territories around the school district.

Interventive Programs: A zero tolerance policy now enforces the rule that any student in possession of a weapon or other dangerous object while on Houston public school property will be suspended and recommended for expulsion, and in some cases the district will pursue criminal charges, arrest and removal to a juvenile detention facility.

Teen Court, established in conjunction with a local branch of the YMCA and local justices of the peace, addresses misdemeanors by minors with referrals to a court setting where the juvenile offenders are tried and sentenced by their peers to community services. Once an offender's sentence is complete, the case is dismissed from the young person's record.

In 1992, the Houston school district opened its first alternative middle school to provide for students whose needs are not met in a traditional school setting, usually due to disciplinary problems; in 1993, two alternative elementary schools were established.

For more information
contact the Houston
Public Schools (713) 892-
6300

Indianapolis Public Schools

"Our purpose is not to put kids in jail. Our purpose is to make them feel in jeopardy of being caught if they bring weapons or instruments of intimidation into the school environment."
—Indianapolis Superintendent Shirl E. Gilbert II.

Background: The Indianapolis Public School System moved early on establishing a comprehensive safety program after a student was critically wounded in 1990. The Indianapolis plan incorporates conflict resolution, counseling, security, a discipline code brochure, and school-based parental involvement programs to address the need for increased security and safety in the school.

Preventive Programs: The school system's discipline code brochure for parents and students clearly spells out what behavior will not be tolerated and the varying consequences. The code is in effect as the student makes the round trip to and from school and during school hours. Fighting, profanity, truancy and disrespect are included in the list of offenses. The code is reinforced by postings in a larger format on classroom walls and at building entrances; pocket-size versions are distributed to middle and high school students.

The Indianapolis school system's Student Assistance Program provides small-group counseling for whatever problems, at home or at school, that students might be facing. The program takes a corrective rather than a punitive approach to behavioral problems. Teachers, administrators, school social workers and counselors have all been trained in the Student Assistance Program approach, providing maximum consistency.

Interventive Programs: Since 1991, Indianapolis public schools have conducted random searches on school grounds — for weapons with metal detectors and for drugs with narcotic-sniffing dogs.

The Marion County Prosecutor has worked with the school system to develop a program that assigns a representative from the prosecutor's office to each junior and senior high school. This information exchange enables school officials and the prosecutor's office to better address behavioral problems.

For more information
contact the Indianapolis
Public Schools (317) 226-
4000

Jefferson County Public Schools

Background: Jefferson County (Missouri) Public Schools have worked with the community and school staff to help create a positive and safe learning environment and to promote healthy life-styles for students and staff.

The SCAT (School/Community Action Teams) were begun two years ago to empower local schools to attack alcohol and drug problems specific to their neighborhoods. School-based teams provide safety materials and host a leadership camp for over 1000 students.

Preventive Programs: All students receive a copy of the school district's Uniform Code of Student Conduct and Student Bill of Rights, providing a clear set of regulations governing student behavior.

Continuing education for school staff, parents and the community is the prime focus of the series of workshops sponsored by the school district. The topics include: Educating the Angry Child; Bullies Need Help; Controlling Anger; Crisis Prevention; Assertive Discipline, among others.

Local police officers and the school district have joined together to provide the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (D.A.R.E.) to combat alcohol and drug abuse among elementary school students. During the 1992-93 school year, 21 police officers from seven law enforcement agencies provided D.A.R.E. classes to every elementary school and several middle schools in Jefferson County.

Interventive Programs: An alternative learning environment for middle and high school students who have demonstrated behavior problems in school has been set up on two campuses. Students must earn their way out of this highly-structured program to get back to their assigned school.

Like many other districts, the Jefferson County Schools has a silent witness hotline that allows students to call anonymously to report illegal activities on campus. The program, called "Not in My School" is a joint effort of the school district and Crime Stoppers, Inc.

The Regional Alcohol and Drug Assessment Center, a partnership with five local treatment facilities and provides assessment and treatment referral services to 854 students from Jefferson and ten other counties.

The Risk Alleviation Project (RAP) provided by the school district features after school and evening programs in leadership training, problem solving and refusal skills for 1,700 students from ten middle schools. RAP also provides alcohol and drug education classes for at-risk students and programs for their parents.

**For more information
contact the Jefferson
County Public Schools
(502) 473-3251**

Los Angeles Public Schools

Background: Underscoring its commitment to violence prevention, the Los Angeles Unified School District has established a regular committee on the Board of Education that addresses School Safety issues full-time. The district has recently put a number of initiatives into place that improve its security. The final report of the District's Emergency Task Force on Youth Violence is due out soon.

Preventive Programs: A code of discipline is published for use by staff, students and parents and publicized at all school sites. Administrators also meet with students in classrooms in all secondary schools to discuss safety and behavior issues.

Peer counseling programs are conducted in secondary schools in the District in an effort to help students help each other. Community meetings also are being held throughout Los Angeles to heighten awareness of safety issues and solicit support from a broad range of community members.

Interventive Programs: All campus officers of the District's school police department are back to wearing full uniforms during regular campus patrols. In addition, the officers have full authority now to issue citations for violations of county and municipal laws that occur off-campus, but in the vicinity of a school.

Like other school systems, Los Angeles has strengthened its policy on students who bring weapons onto school campuses. Students now will be recommended for expulsion regardless of age or grade level. A weapons tip line for anonymous calls in either English or Spanish also has been established.

The District conducts random daily searches of students using hand-held metal detectors. Signs are posted throughout school buildings and on outside fences warning of random searches. Parent patrols are utilized in some elementary schools, and community members near some school sites have been mobilized to act as neighborhood watches for criminal activity.

In addition, the Los Angeles School District has trained Youth Relations Assistants to assist at school sites mediating tense situations.

For more information
contact the Los Angeles
Public Schools (213) 625-
6251

Memphis Public Schools

Background: Like many other school systems, increased violence in schools has caused the Memphis City Schools to look to local law enforcement for help. The schools are working with the Memphis Police Department on several new initiatives.

Preventive Programs: Principals and assistant principals of all schools recently took part in a special training program on school violence and safety concerns. In addition, a four-day program of crisis prevention will take place in 1994 for a cross-section of Memphis City Schools staff. The program will cover effective ways to deal with disruptive students, intervention techniques, and other areas of crisis management.

A school system steering committee is helping each school assess its safety needs and determine concerns and school-based safety initiatives. A district-wide survey was conducted in December 1993 to collect hard data on Memphis school safety.

Another recent initiative is a new student code of conduct which will be published and distributed soon to students, staff and parents.

Interventive Programs: "Weapons Watch" is a new program with the Police Department and Crime Stoppers that allows students to anonymously report persons who carry weapons on school campus. A \$50 reward is offered for successful tips.

An "Officers-in-School" Program brings Memphis City Police into school campuses to be on-site to protect student safety. Twenty armed and uniformed officers patrol 39 secondary schools on a shared-time basis. Each officer is assigned to two schools, and they spend equal time at each campus. The officers act both as a deterrent for violent behavior, and as a comforting presence for students who may want to confide in someone they know. In addition to the officers, the school system has a security staff of full- and part-time employees who monitor alarms and assist police when needed.

"Many solutions to violence on school campuses must be supported by law enforcement and the community."

—Memphis
School
Superintendent
Gerry House

For more information
contact the Memphis
Public Schools (901) 325-
5444

Milwaukee Public Schools

"We cannot let crime and violence in our community destroy the learning atmosphere in our schools. Schools must be safe and secure for our children to learn."
—Howard Fuller,
Milwaukee School Superintendent

Background: Milwaukee Public Schools recently underwent a complete security audit by two independent consultants. Now the Board of Education is implementing a plan based on many of the consultants' recommendations that work toward a safe and secure school environment.

Preventive Programs: Psychological services staff are monitoring the application of prevention curricula and intervention programs in elementary schools. The primary focus of these programs is to prevent safety and discipline problems at the elementary level by teaching children problem-solving, conflict-resolution and safety skills as well as behavioral self control.

In addition, all teachers will take part in in-service training on nonviolent crisis intervention. This program will stress ways to handle disruptive and assaultive people in crisis. Training in First Aid and CPR for school emergencies will also be offered to all staff.

Interventive Programs: Milwaukee schools have made a commitment to hiring more safety aides and security supervisors over the next three years. Security personnel will also begin wearing uniforms and be assigned to only one school.

In addition, the Milwaukee schools are creating a city-wide, two-way radio/telephone system for regular and emergency communication. The network will consist of three separate, but coordinated systems: a.) Department of School Safety and all schools with each other and the Milwaukee Police Department; b.) Department of Community Recreation and Education Services; c.) Department of Facilities and Maintenance Services. The communication system will reduce response time by safety/security officials to incidents within the schools.

Finally, the school system is focusing on building safety by providing access controls at all elementary schools, re-keying high schools, upgrading public address systems and installing security systems in schools that did not have them.

For more information
contact the Milwaukee
Public Schools, School
Safety Div. (414) 345-6635

Minneapolis Public Schools

Background: The Minneapolis Public Schools are working with the Mayor's office, City Council, Hennepin County Commissioner, the Library Board and the Park Board to develop collaboratively and implement a safe schools/community and violence prevention plan. This plan will incorporate, enhance, and further support programs already in progress.

Preventive Programs: Minneapolis Public Schools work toward the goal of creating "contemporary community cultures" within each of its schools. These are cultures in which all members expect and demonstrate respect and nonviolent behavior in all aspects of their school life. Each Minneapolis school must plan, implement and evaluate its own school culture. School district staff supports schools in choosing among a variety of strategies that fit the staff, students and community. Peer mediation and conflict resolution training programs for staff and students have been incorporated into many school plans over the past few years. In addition, comprehensive sexual harassment training for staff and students continues to be implemented.

The school board also adopted a discipline policy that establishes rules — especially a prohibition of weapons in school — and delineates consequences. All students are required to sign a statement indicating that they have read and understand the district's discipline policy.

Several initiatives by students for students will be implemented in the 1993-94 school year: A radio program hosted by each of the school district's middle schools will begin in the 1993-94 school year. The shows by students and accompanying curriculum will identify how miscommunication can cause conflict and teach students how to manage anger and choose alternatives to violence. Students also will produce four 20-minute productions of original dramatic material focused on issues they feel are most crucial to them. In addition, students will hold a conference on violence prevention, where they will organize the discussion and prepare recommendations for the adults in the community.

Interventive Programs: Crisis teams consisting of social workers, principals, psychologists and parents are activated in the school district when there is a threat of violence or a violent act occurs. The team works with staff and students in crisis management.

Each of our secondary schools has a juvenile liaison officer as part of their school team. These officers are also available to elementary schools on an on-call basis. Through joint programs with the Minneapolis Police Department, Park Board, CARE and SAFE programs exist in several elementary schools. Uniformed

"Children cannot learn if they feel physically and/or emotionally unsafe. It takes the entire community working together to make sure they feel safe."

—Peter Hutchinson,
Minneapolis
Public School
Superintendent

police officers are located in each of the district's secondary schools and athletic and sponsored events. All Minneapolis public schools are posted as Safety and Drug-Free Zones.

For more information
contact the Minneapolis
Public Schools (612) 627-
2022

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Background: The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is currently involved in working with school personnel, the police department and the community to improve security, to implement youth programs, and to create school improvement plans that promote a positive, safe and orderly school climate.

Preventive Programs: All Metropolitan Nashville schools must develop a School Improvement Program which incorporates a focus on discipline and safety. The Board of Education requires that each school's objectives must be measurable.

In addition, Nashville teachers will receive in-service training on nonviolent crisis intervention, and participate in a new employee tracking system requiring call-in and call-out procedures. Nashville public school bus drivers are involved in extended conflict management training and nonviolent crisis intervention training, in an effort to improve discipline on school buses.

Nashville schools also will begin teaching law-related education as part of a pilot program with the U.S. Department of Justice. This curriculum becomes part of the daily lessons and features information on the laws and justice system of the nation.

Metropolitan Nashville schools are working with the Sheriff's Department in developing a video on the consequences of making poor behavioral decisions, and focusing on citizenship and values. The school system also is working with police on a professional video on crime prevention featuring youth-related scenarios.

Police Athletic League sports teams for youth now use school facilities for some of its programs, a fact that has increased police presence on school grounds.

Interventive Programs: A community service pilot program has been designed to keep students off the streets and in school during disciplinary periods. The program has three parts: a.) instead of suspension, a student will be allowed to stay in school, but will be required to do several hours of community service after school; b.) an in-house suspension would require the student to do several hours of class work and an assignment within the school premises; c.) if there is no way to keep the student in school, he or she will be assigned to community service through the Juvenile Court. Organizers of the pilot program have located 120 community service "assignments."

In conjunction with the Nashville Police, uniformed officers have been assigned to five high schools; all schools are served by seven plain clothed police juvenile officers as well.

**For more information
contact the Nashville
Public Schools (615) 259-
8419**

Newark Public Schools

Background: The Newark School District has adopted various procedures/actions for the 1993-94 school year to prevent crime in and around schools.

Interventive Programs: A comprehensive security plan has been distributed to the assistant executive superintendent of each cluster of schools. This Security Operational Plan has layouts of each school and the personalized schedule for security personnel assigned to the location.

Four Rapid Response Teams of one uniformed police officer and one school security officer patrol district schools daily during school hours reducing incidence of stolen vehicles and other illegal activity. In addition, intrusion alarm systems have been upgraded to provide better protection to school facilities after-hours. In one secondary school prone to graffiti vandals, a camera monitoring system is being added.

The Newark school system has installed walk-through metal detectors in three secondary schools. Additional units are being bid for another three schools as well as supplementary units for the three original locations.

Newark schools hold an annual in-service training for all security guards, and have a 24-hour hot-line telephone number for students to anonymously report concerns and crimes.

For more information
contact the Newark Public
Schools (201) 733-7333

New Orleans Public Schools

Background: New Orleans Public Schools conducted a series of public forums in preparation for a district-wide safety and security plan during the summer of 1993. The superintendent, school board, parents and community members, as well as Superintendent of Police, members of the New Orleans City Council, the Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff, and the School District's security staff all participated in the forums.

Preventive Programs: To come up with effective safety plans, the forums recommended that each school form a safety and security team consisting of the school administrator, parents, community members, students, teachers and other staff, security counselors and its New Orleans Police Department District Commander. Concerns to be addressed were safety and security of the physical plan; supervision of students before and after school; student rules, procedures, and identification; weapons, substance abuse, and conflict resolution in the school; rules and procedures for faculty and staff; and, analysis of data regarding incidents relating to safety and security.

In November, the district launched a system-wide program to help students resolve conflicts peacefully, with an emphasis on respect, discipline and diplomacy. The program is modeled after the successful New York program "Resolving Conflict Creatively."

Interventive Programs: The school teams were to examine the appropriateness of uniforms, ID cards, two-way radio communication, metal detectors, gun and drug dogs, random searches and other safety measures for their schools.

Each school has now submitted a plan especially tailored to its own unique needs. The principal is responsible for implementing and monitoring the plan to ensure accountability.

For more information
contact the New Orleans
Public Schools (504) 286-
1315

Norfolk Public Schools

"Norfolk Public Schools...is directing efforts toward providing a more effective school security force plus 'target hardening' of schools to serve as a deterrent for acts of crime and violence."
—Norfolk Public School Report

Background: Norfolk Public Schools have been working for several years toward long-term solutions to improve safety on its campuses. Recently, the school district has dramatically changed its security forces and programs to stop crime in schools.

Preventive Programs: Norfolk Public Schools offer training for both teachers and students in conflict resolution without violence. A district-wide seventh grade health course incorporates a "Teens and Guns" curriculum that shows the personal crisis using guns can create. For school employees, the Norfolk schools have instituted an Employee Security Education Awareness Program geared toward making all school staff better aware and effectively responsive to conflict and acts of violence.

Norfolk Public Schools also are piloting an expanding community and student program for pre-teens, mentoring programs, adopt-a-student, after school activities, early childhood programs, Saturday detention, intramural sports in middle schools, parental support, partnerships, and numerous other activities and school/community programs.

Interventive Programs: Norfolk schools are all required to participate in the Physical Security Survey/Assessment Program, to "target harden" and identify ways to improve security in the building and grounds. Security measures identified that can be improved or corrected within budget constraints will be made, and those measures requiring changes or upgrades in security equipment or construction will be planned for future funding.

The Norfolk school district hired a security coordinator in 1991, and has certified security officers (with full arrest power) in high schools and middle schools. Officers have expanded use of hand-held radios to quickly call in police or emergency medical personnel when necessary.

Recently, the Norfolk schools have initiated a greater police presence with random and regular inspection of lockers, classrooms and parking lots with Norfolk Police Drug Detection Dogs and State Police Explosive Detection Dogs. A police car is on site at middle and high schools during the first and last few weeks of the school year. In addition, the Norfolk schools work in partnership with the police, courts and Commonwealth Attorney to process and deter unlawful behavior and enforce mandatory suspensions and prosecution for certain crimes and violent acts. Probation officers are on-site in some secondary schools.

SMART (School Management and Resource Team) is a model incidence reporting system that develops current data on types, frequencies and locations of

disruptive or violent behavior. Data from these analyses are used to implement strict rules and regulations district-wide.

To keep intruders at bay, all schools have no trespassing signs and an employee and visitor access control program with I.D. cards. Video cameras are now on school buses, with expanded use soon in hallways, cafeterias and stairwells of secondary schools. The district is currently assessing electronic technology at each school for increased protection.

For more information
contact the Norfolk Public
Schools (804) 441-2107

"By the time they reach adolescence, many urban children have experienced a level of violence once unknown except to soldiers in combat...."
—Rose Washington, Commissioner, Juvenile Justice, New York City.

For more information
contact the New York City
Public Schools (718) 935-
2794

New York City Public Schools

Background: New York City Public Schools recently have adopted an eight point program to supplement other initiatives that are curbing violence in the city's school system. The PASS Program (Preventive Action for School Safety) provides parents, students and the community with a series of concrete actions they can take on behalf of the schools against violent behavior.

Preventive Programs: New York City schools teach Project SAFE (Safe Actions For Everyone), a training program for parents and elementary school children that teaches safety basics such as defenses against strangers and other important safety tips. In addition, Parents' School Safety Advisory Groups have been developed citywide and for each city borough. The goal of the groups is to work with parents to increase their participation in school safety-related initiatives, including volunteer efforts.

New York City Public Schools also are working with local religious leaders to develop a New York Clergy's School Safety Council that would help promote anti-school violence activities and initiatives within church communities.

For elementary school children, the city's school system is working with the National Crime Prevention Council on a magazine for children featuring McGruff, the anti-crime dog. The subject of the magazine would be school safety and violence prevention.

New York City schools distribute a Bill of Students' Rights and Responsibilities for grades K-12 and a Bill of Parents' Rights and Responsibilities. The bill of rights for students is incorporated into each school's instructional programs so all students can learn it effectively. In addition to English, the documents are available in Spanish, Chinese, Haitian, Korean and Russian.

All New York City public high schools have peer mediators to help resolve conflict nonviolently. Staff and safety officers also receive extensive training in conflict resolution and violence prevention. Project STOP (Schools Teaching Options for Peace) and the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program are curriculum that teach students alternatives to violence.

Interventive Programs: The PASS Program has created a school safety Youthline, which is staffed 24-hours a day by trained staff from the New York City Division of Youth Services. Parents, students and others can call at anytime with a concern, issue or information on school safety. A separate Guns in School Tipline also has been established for anonymous information about weapons.

As part of the Safe Streets/Safe city program, daily weapons detection takes place in 41 high schools in conjunction with the schools' photo ID card entry system.

Oakland Public Schools

Background: The Oakland Unified School District depends on its Health and Safety program to address "life circumstances" of students and families, and collaborates with other public and private agencies in addressing the health, mental health and safety needs of students and their families.

Preventive Programs: After a six month planning process inclusive of teachers, school and district administrators, area superintendents, parents, students and community-based organizations, the following programs were put into place in Oakland schools: a social work/case management structure; parent/grandparent support; peer education; a math and science tutorial program; substance abuse and life skills curriculum; and in-service training for district staff on issues of health and safety. In addition, a conflict resolution training program has been expanded for teachers and students with successful results.

In addition, a Church School Partnership Program links the needs of specific school sites with the resources of local church communities. Resources include mentors and tutors and use of church facilities for off-site classes, meetings and special events. The Oakland School District also contributes facilities, utilities and custodial services for a pilot program call the Midnight Basketball Project which targets young adults ages 17-25 and provides nighttime basketball activities with an educational program.

Oakland secondary schools also offer Teens on Target (TNT), a peer antiviolence program that teaches peer educators about street and domestic violence and trains them to make presentations to other schools. The district also established collaboration between TNT, Youth Alive, and a local hospital by establishing peer "buddy" teams of graduates and current members of Teens on Target to visit teen victims of weapons violence at the hospital in the hope of convincing them not to retaliate and to accept alternatives to street life.

Interventive Programs: A Safety Conference held in October 1992 helped schools facilitate the site-based safety plans that are in place today. Parent patrols now supplement security officer patrols in many schools.

For the school district's most at-risk students attending alternative high schools, a program called Project PAD (Partners Against Drugs) features a unique business-oriented drug prevention curriculum, social work case management services, parent liaisons, a drug counselor, school nurse, health screenings and referrals and enrichment activities.

For more information
contact the Oakland
Public Schools (510) 836-
8200

Oklahoma City Public Schools

Background: Oklahoma City Public Schools has brought together a district-wide School Violence Committee which has been appointed to make recommendations for implementing new security procedures and violence prevention programs.

Preventive Programs: A violence prevention curriculum has been implemented at the elementary school level, as well as in-service training programs for administrators and staff in gang awareness.

Interventive Programs: The district uses walk-through and hand-held metal detectors at all high schools and hand-held metal detectors at all middle schools. An Oklahoma City police officer is assigned full-time to each high and middle school in the district. In addition, full-time security officers (all commissioned police officers) are assigned to each high school parking lot.

To avoid trespassers, the district maintains "closed campuses" at all schools. Picture ID cards are required to be displayed by all high and middle school students. "Parents on Patrol" programs to maintain further security have also been initiated at three secondary schools.

For more information
contact the Oklahoma City
Public Schools (405) 297-
6540

Omaha Public Schools

Background: The Omaha Public School District has made student safety a priority in several initiatives undertaken by the schools and in cooperation with community agencies, parents and a Youth Violence Task Force. The School District meets monthly with the Police Chief and leaders from the Omaha Housing Authority, Omaha Boys Club, the Mayor's Office and the Omaha Community Partnership to maintain communication on safety issues such as gang activity, thefts and crowd control.

Preventive Programs: A Student Management Plan emphasizes social skills and behavior rules for elementary students so they can learn early on how to act in school. Some schools have incorporated conflict managers into their plans. Conflict managers are student volunteers who are selected after specific training and parent approval. Staff are trained to sponsor and conduct this student program. The conflict manager program currently is being extended to middle schools. A Positive Peer Culture program also has been continued for many years as a successful way to involve students in problem resolution at all grade levels.

Interventive Programs: School safety audits conducted by the National School Safety Center have been very helpful in assisting staff in developing school safety plans. Schools are equipped with "emergency flip charts" that provide directions for action in all emergencies. These flip charts also identify for employees the staff contacts who will act in emergency situations in the building or department.

For more information
contact the Omaha Public
Schools (402) 557-2001

Philadelphia Public Schools

"Both local schools and the School District must engage the community in efforts to respond to the range of problems associated with violence."
—Philadelphia Public Schools Task Force Report

Background: In 1992, the School District of Philadelphia brought together civic leaders, parents and other interested members of the community to examine the problem of increased violence in Philadelphia schools. The Task Force on the Role of the School in a Violent Society was established to find solutions to the problem by engaging the community to work toward effective and sound discipline policy and violence prevention instruction. Many of the Task Force's recommendations are currently being implemented.

Preventive Programs: In November 1993, a successful three-day forum was held entitled: It Takes a Community To Raise A Child: A Forum on Legislative and Community Action to Safeguard Children and Youth. The forum was comprised of a series of workshops for parents, students, community organizers, violence prevention specialists, teachers and anyone interested in making schools violence free.

A guide on violence prevention strategies has been developed for distribution to teachers, administrators and parents. The guide proposes lessons and activities to be used in the classroom and features a list of publications and multimedia materials about violence prevention available to teachers, parents and students.

Other initiatives include: "Putting Safety First Week," developing a guide for teaching the code of student conduct to grades K-8 and 9-12, facilitating ongoing staff development in violence prevention strategies, continuing development of a ninth grade focus on critical health issues and providing violence prevention mini-grants to schools.

Interventive Programs: The Task Force made clear that the school's role was to eliminate weapons by "whatever is necessary" including newly instituted random metal detector and locker searches. The district is also continuing its partnership with the police, using parental and community volunteers to patrol hallways, and has strengthened its disciplinary policy. Central security operations within the Philadelphia public schools have been reorganized to provide a stronger support function for superintendents and principals.

For more information
contact the Philadelphia
Public Schools (215) 299-
7823

Phoenix Union High School District

Background: The Phoenix Union High School District has a number of programs to safeguard school students and teachers. Efforts focus both on staff and students.

Preventive: The School District has a number of programs focusing mainly on school staff as a way of ensuring safety in the schools. Some of these include: a "Multicultural Awareness Workshop" that permits staff to explore and appreciate similarities and differences in cultures, and to examine the causes and effects of stereotypes and prejudices that can lead to hostilities. Another program is the "Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Strategies" program which teaches faculty and staff skills and techniques for managing aggressive and violent behavior, with a focus on providing the best care, welfare, safety and security for all. And another program, the "Potential Disaster and Emergency Actions" program, focuses staff on what to do and what to say when the threat of disaster has the potential to disrupt the safe and orderly operation of a school.

In addition to those programs for teachers and staff, the district has a number of other initiatives focusing on students. One of these efforts is a program called "Unitown" where students are exposed to an intense five-days of human relations training, self-esteem building, and leadership education in a non-school setting. Other programs include "Project Impact" which works with students who have returned to school as probationers or parolees from the juvenile justice system. The program assigns a project specialist to work as a liaison between the school and the judicial system.

The district has also designed a "Student Problem Identification and Resolution (SPIR) program to help both administrators and students gain insights to how the other thinks and acts as a way of promoting greater respect from both sides.

Interventive Programs: The Phoenix High School District also has a Human Relations Team specially trained to nip any gang activity in the bud by prohibiting anything related to gang membership, signs, behavior or clothing. The team is also used to paint over graffiti as quickly as possible, and to assess a school's vulnerability for security problems. The group is also charged with developing positive relations with students, reviewing discipline rules with students, and assigning violent prone students to alternative programs with counseling. The team also supplies security training for staff and develop a system-wide security handbook to handle all manner of emergencies. They also coordinate the district's work with local police and other agencies.

For more information on
Phoenix Union High
Schools (602) 271-3122

Pittsburgh Public Schools

"Schools that experience the daily threat of potential student violence have their primary mission—education—eroded at great cost to students and the future of the community."
—Pittsburgh Public Schools' Safe School Project

Background: Pittsburgh Public Schools have worked with the media, local foundations, school personnel, parents and law enforcement officials to confront the recent phenomenon of gangs, guns, and violence in Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Schools' "Safe Schools Project" taps into community resources to curb violent behavior in the schools.

Preventive Programs: Pittsburgh police come to elementary schools to conduct the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program. The STAR program impacts all subject areas in elementary schools and promotes positive behaviors such as respect and honesty. In addition, the Heartwood program uses multicultural readings for discussion of ethical issues and conflict resolution.

Pittsburgh Public Schools offer training for students and staff in conflict resolution, gang suppression and violence prevention. Several schools have trained student mediators for peer resolution of student conflicts and disputes.

Interventive Programs: Pittsburgh Public Schools conduct random metal detector searches, locker searches and bring in drug-sniffing dogs when necessary. Since September 1990, a member of the Board of Education has heard every disciplinary case involving drugs and weapons. Members of the Board also hear suspension cases that exceed 10 days. This helps the Board keep up-to-date on the number of serious misdemeanors in the school system.

Pittsburgh schools have uniformed school police officers, resident security specialists and other security personnel. All middle and high schools have security staff assigned on a permanent basis. In addition, each middle and high school has a core team of staff who are specially trained to handle student problems and crisis situations. Elementary schools also have teams which recommend programming and services for students in crisis.

For more information
contact the Pittsburgh
Public Schools (412) 622-
3775

Providence Public Schools

Background: The Providence Public School Department has recently put into effect a number of new initiatives to curb violence and increase safety in the city's schools.

Preventive Programs: Providence public schools distribute a pamphlet to parents that provides them with helpful hints about discussing weapons with their children. A policy notice about the schools zero tolerance for weapons also is distributed to parents twice a year.

The Providence Police Department helps the schools with gang prevention by conducting the G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education And Training) program to Providence seventh graders. This program teaches the students to resist peer pressure and exposes them to the seditious effects of gangs on city neighborhoods. The complementary Students Off Streets (SOS) program is conducted in the middle schools by former gang members who talk to students about gangs and the trouble they cause.

Training workshops on school security and violence issues have been held for all superintendents and staff members. A School Safety Committee made up of teachers from all secondary schools meets monthly to work on school safety issues.

Interventive Programs: Providence School Department has established a zero tolerance policy for weapons and acts of violence. If a student is caught with a weapon, the student may be suspended up to 180 days. Three teams of Providence police officers are assigned to the schools.

Students are required to wear ID's in all high schools and at two middle schools. Trespassing signs are prominently displayed in several languages at the entrance to all school buildings.

"We have to get out the message that deviant behavior, whether by an individual or a group, is not an acceptable rite of passage."

—Providence
Public School
Superintendent
Arthur Larrella.

For more information
contact the Providence
Public Schools (401) 456-
9211

Rochester Public Schools

Background: Rochester City School District has taken a variety of steps to address the rising incidence of violence in and around schools in the past few years. Since 1991, the Rochester School District's Civic Values Policy has provided a curriculum framework for the behavior of all students and staff. Now that policy has been broadened to include violence prevention efforts and a stronger discipline policy.

Preventive Programs: The District has created a Safe School Climate Task Force and held numerous meetings with students, parents and school administrators to communicate the dangers and consequences of weapons possession. In addition, staff has been trained in conflict resolution and peer mediation.

The District is also developing new policies and programs for 1994 that will promote a peace through arts curriculum, and further engage community agencies and the Rochester Police Department in violence prevention efforts. Twenty-two Rochester schools also have received mini-grants to support school-based violence prevention programs.

Interventive Programs: The District has strengthened its weapons policy to require notification of the Rochester Police Department whenever students have weapons in their possession. Rochester schools also are developing new policies and programs that will deter assaults and involve parents more directly in the long-term suspension process.

For more information
contact the Rochester
Public Schools (716) 262-
8378

San Diego Public Schools

Preventive Programs: San Diego schools have parent patrols to help deter violence in the schools.

Interventive Programs: In 1993, San Diego City Schools announced a new zero tolerance policy regarding weapons and fighting on city school campuses. Possession of a weapon or participating in a violate act will cause a student to be removed from all comprehensive school sites in the district for a minimum of one semester.

San Diego has a 24-hour anonymous hotline for reporting vandalism, intruders and gang activity at school sites.

For more information
contact the San Diego
Public Schools (619) 293-
8418

Seattle Public Schools

Background: Seattle Public Schools have implemented a variety of violence prevention activities and reviewed recommendations from a 1992 Weapons Task Force to improve security measures and initiate a "no tolerance" weapons policy.

Preventive Programs: The FACES program (For All Concerned Educators and Students) provides training that celebrates the diversity of the Seattle school population. Diversity training goes beyond ethnic diversity and addresses life experience diversity that each of the students bring with them to school. In addition, Seattle schools have a South Pacific Islander Dropout Prevention Program and Samoan Intervention Services to help these students adjust to their learning environment.

Seattle elementary school children participate in a variety of curriculum that stresses refusal skills, safety and appropriate problem-solving. Older elementary students learn to be conflict managers who assist other students in resolving differences such as playground disputes. A new health curriculum will emphasize personal and social skills with a focus on injury prevention. In addition, many elementary schools have newly published codes of conduct and/or updated discipline plans with high expectations for appropriate behavior.

In secondary schools, conflict prevention training and early intervention services for youth with anger management problems have been in place for nine years. Second Step is a curriculum designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in children and to increase their level of social competency through empathy training, interpersonal cognitive problem-solving, behavior social skill training and anger management.

Interventive Programs: Seattle schools have a no-tolerance policy and stringent guidelines and procedures for students bringing weapons to school and for serious assaultive behavior. Students face expulsion and possible prosecution.

In the Seattle secondary schools, a Gang Response Team (GRT) provides intervention services to youth identified by school staff or parents as exhibiting gang behavior. The staff works closely with school security, local law enforcement agencies, and community based resources to stem the tide of youth involvement in gangs.

When students are detained or under court supervision, interagency programs provide instruction for them in the County Detention Center, juvenile justice or social service agencies. The programs help equip students with the necessary social and academic skills to participate successfully in their next learning environment.

Seattle schools have metal detectors at all high and middle schools for use at the school's discretion. Security personnel equipped with two-way radios are on-site during regular school hours. In addition, the Security Office Alarm Center is open 24-hours a day to receive phone calls relating to questionable activity in and around school district facilities.

**For more information
contact the Seattle Public
Schools (206) 298-7100**

St. Louis Public Schools

"Diligent work has taken place, and will continue, regarding our efforts to assure that the schools are safe environments."
—David J. Mahan, St. Louis Public Schools Superintendent

Background: During the 1992-93 school year, the St. Louis Public Schools took a close look at problems of discipline and behavior. Recommendations were developed by an Ad Hoc Committee of school administrators, law enforcement officials, clergy, parents, and students. Implementation has expanded existing programs and developed new ones.

Preventive Programs: Conflict resolution training has been augmented, with emphasis on the middle grades. The program, led by the Law and Citizenship Education Unit, has been chosen as a state model. A high school component developed a peer counseling activity and a student handbook on drugs, violence and gangs. Standards for graduation and participation in athletics and extracurricular activities were revised to conform with state requirements.

Students in middle and high schools were required to wear ID badges during the school day. A voluntary school uniform policy, at the discretion of parents from individual schools, was adopted by a dozen schools with others showing interest.

The Student Code of Conduct was revised, with sterner penalties for fighting. Workshops, publications and other activities informed parents and the community about student rights, responsibilities and required conduct.

Interventive Programs: Cooperative activities with police have been upgraded. In the "We Are Responsible (WAR)" program, officers are in elementary schools daily and discuss behavior questions with students. A state funded police assistance program had stationed officers in and around troubled schools in 1991-92. This effort is being revived through federal funding in which the focus will be on community school neighborhoods in 1994-95.

The nationally-recognized "Caring Communities" Program at one elementary schools has been expanded to other sites. Caring Communities, through state and foundation grants, works closely with students and their families to provide a variety of counseling and social services.

The "Expanded Recreation Sites" program makes facilities in six St. Louis public schools open from 5-10 PM and has an average daily attendance of 125 individuals. At each site, four city Recreation Department staffers supervise basketball, volleyball, aerobics, table games, art and crafts and tutoring programs. School staff provides custodial services and helps with security. The "positive" evening activities for young people and adults are a collaborative between the city and the schools and involves a total of fifteen sites.

In addition to security guards posted at most schools, a roving security force moves rapidly to schools where unrest develops. As students enter the building, they are checked visually or by other appropriate means (e.g., pat down, purse or bookbag search). Hand-held metal detectors may be used with the superintendent's permission.

**For more information
contact the St. Louis Public
Schools (314) 231-1978**

Tucson Public Schools

“The ideas and concepts behind much of what we are doing are quite simple, but they work. It is clear that a positive approach to school safety, integrated into the curriculum, holds great promise.”

—Tucson Public Schools
Superintendent
Dr. George F.
Garcia.

Background: Tucson Unified School District is at the forefront of school safety efforts for its students. The Tucson district has established a variety of unique programs that capitalize on direct involvement by students, parents and the community.

Preventive Programs: Tucson schools have a Violence Prevention Team comprised of staff with diverse backgrounds who are specially trained in violence prevention, intervention and mediation. The team places a high priority on educating all staff members, at all levels, about safety awareness and how to work collectively to ensure safe and secure learning environments.

Additionally, more than 300 informational meetings and presentations on gangs and preventing school youth violence have been held by the Tucson district for parents, students, teachers and the community. “Rights and responsibilities” handbooks have been distributed to both students and their parents, outlining expectations for student behavior.

The Tucson curriculum in grades K-8 includes lessons in violence prevention, conflict resolution and peacekeeping. The “I Help Bring Peace” and “The Path of the Warrior” programs help elementary and middle school students respectively resolve differences through reason and mediation rather than verbal or physical violence.

Interventive Programs: Tucson schools have a Parents on Patrol program on five campuses, with plans to expand to other schools. A School Watch program encourages neighbors of the school to take an active role in watching for unusual activity on school campuses and in outlying grounds.

In addition, parents, students and friends of the school can call the Safe-T-Zone telephone hotline to anonymously report any illegal or suspicious activity.

For more information
contact the Tucson Public
Schools (602) 882-2436

